



TOWN OF UPTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Historical Commission

Meeting Minutes

Date: Oct. 4, 2023

Location: In person and Microsoft Teams Meeting

Call to Order

Having a quorum, the meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM.

In Attendance

Committee Members:

- Craig Weinfuss – Chair – PRESENT - virtual
- Katherine Worsham - Co-Chair - PRESENT
- Joan Burrell - Treasurer - PRESENT
- Edward Phillips - Secretary - PRESENT
- Donna Kempton – Not PRESENT
- Patrick Rosendale – PRESENT
- Russell Wood – PRESENT
- 6 guests present
- 2 guests virtual

Discussion

Agenda – Discussion re: 40B apartment on Main St

- Meeting called to order at 7:19
- Proposed 40B development at 47 Main 6.5 acres project by Lobiseer Construction of a 68 units apartment complex – property next to Pickering Funeral home
- Katherine investigated any historical significance to the property – no structures showing on the 1850 map – the property is mixture of march and possibly grazing land – no evidence of any homes ever built there
- Russ Wood states there is a nice stone wall – formerly owned by Fisk family, previously by the Ball family and had been used as a hay field
- A brook runs under school st and there used to be a road at the upper end of the property to access it for haying
- Possibly King family-owned land near it also used for farming
- No knowledge of any historical structures on the property

- Question was asked if the Grange had any association with this property and Ed and Joan stated the Grange land was purchased from a town resident in 1847 or so and the school opened about 1849. The school was sold to the Grange in 1926 by the
- Town.
- Question was asked if a chicken farm was ever on the property
Russ said not they knows.
- There was a creamery next to it that may have used a small portion of the land at one time
- One member shared a handout of the site discussing historical significance – she shared a slide show showing the building, 5 stories including the basement.
 - o Do the stone walls have archeological significance
 - o Are they related to the native Americans
 - o Site of an old cranberry bog
 - o 2 streams in the area that provide drinking water
 - o Should the site be investigated for archeological significance
 - o What happens if construction causes flooding to homes on the National Registry of historical property?
 - o A vote for a local historic district lost by one vote several years ago
 - o There were three districts identified as historic that are listed with the Mass Historical Commission - Macris
 - o Katherine stated there are homes on Main St that are listed on the National Register but this property is not part of the historic district
 - o The EDC did a survey of the towns people who voted to preserve the old town look – part of the discussion were to limit construction to no more than three stories
 - o The handout shows a virtual image of what the apartment complex will like from Main St.
- Katherine stated that if our zoning board denies the building request the builder could appeal to the state and if the state gets involved the existing stone walls would have no consequence to their decision.
- Katherine stated her opinion is if there are “stone walls” they are likely of colonial origin or later but Native American as they did not build stone walls.
- Russ stated the building would not “fit” into the residential neighborhood.
- Russ also added that the design of the High School was done to “fit” into the neighborhood.
- Katherine stated that zoning changes would not prevent a building from being built if it was a 40b construction.
- Upton only has 6% low-income housing and the state wants 10%.
- Questions was asked why we can’t stand up and say this construction will damage the historical appearance of the center of town.
- The town offered the builder another parcel but the owner wants this one as it has town sewerage and water.
- One resident expressed concern with the traffic increase.
- Katherine proposed a motion to send a letter to the Planning Board to state the building does not fit the historical beauty of the area and could cause possible water damage to historical homes in the area.

Meeting Adjourned

Joan made a motion to adjourn, Russ seconded, motion to adjourn was passed at 8:28
 Respectfully submitted
 Ed Phillips
 Secretary